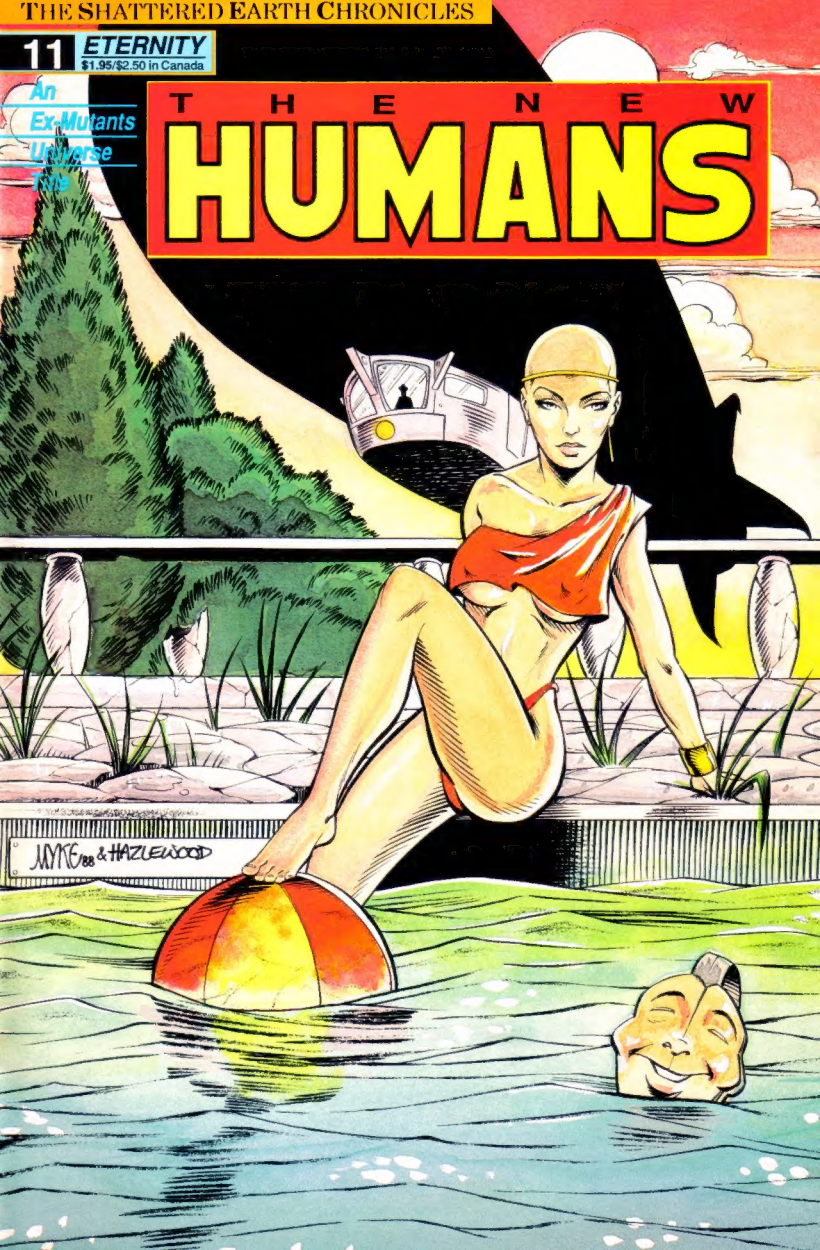
THE SHATTERED EARTH CHRONICLES

11 ETERNITY

$1.95/$2.50 in Canada

An Ex-Mutants Universe Title

THE NEW HUMANS



NEW HUMANS

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AN EX-MUTANTS UNIVERSE TITLE

The New Humans: Placed in suspended animation by the United States government as part of the top secret Jupiter Project, Duke Goldberg, Kelly Brock, Calvin Gordon, and Roger Brunner awaken 30 years later to discover a world filled with deadly radiation; its inhabitants mutated victims of the most deadly war mankind has ever fought.

Our Story So Far: The New Humans, after rescuing Calvin from the hands of the Atlanteans (as recounted in the *New Humans Annual*), are enjoying a little rest and relaxation in what used to be California.

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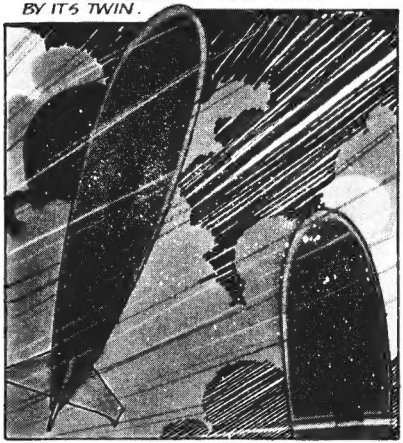
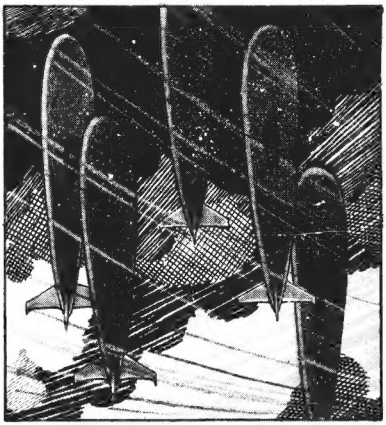
THE METHUSELAH SOCIETY PART ONE

THIS CLOSE TO THE NORTH POLE, THE ARCTIC WINDS BLOW HARD AND COLD WITH RAZOR-LIKE FURY THAT LACERATES SKIN TO THE BONE.
THE FREEZING AIR, SO FATAL AND CLOSE, SEEMS A FAVORABLE ALTERNATIVE TO THE HUMID AND FETID MIASMA OF THE OBSERVATION CAR--
--A STEAMY WET CHAMBER SMELLING OF OLD PERFUME AND ANCIENT FLESH.
THE MASKED SERVANT SQUIRMS IN THE RICHLY UPHOLSTERED SEAT, FIGHTING THE URGE TO SMASH THE GLASS BEFORE HIM, THAT HE MIGHT HURL HIMSELF FROM THE AIRSHIP--
--GATHERING GREAT LUNGFULS OF PRECIOUS COLD AIR AS HE TUMBLED TO HIS DEATH.
BUT HE HASN'T THE COURAGE. COUNTESS CROESUS WOULD DISAPPROVE, AND THE TERROR OF HER DISAPPOINTMENT IS MORE HORRIBLE THAN DEATH ITSELF.
GRIPPED WITH MORBID FASCINATION, THE SERVANT STARES AT HIS MISTRESS' MOUTH-
--A LIPSTICK-SMEARED GASH OF DECAYING SPLENDOR, ALWAYS MOVING, ALWAYS MAKING WET NOISES...
OOO, BUT IT'S COLD IN HERE. COME SIT ON MAMA'S LAP, BOY.
YES, MA'AM.

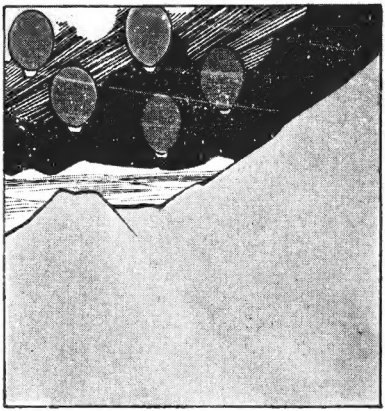
SWIMMING THROUGH THE SKY LIKE AN AIRBORNE LEVIATHAN, COUNTESS CROESUS' AIRSHIP IS SOON JOINED BY ITS TWIN.



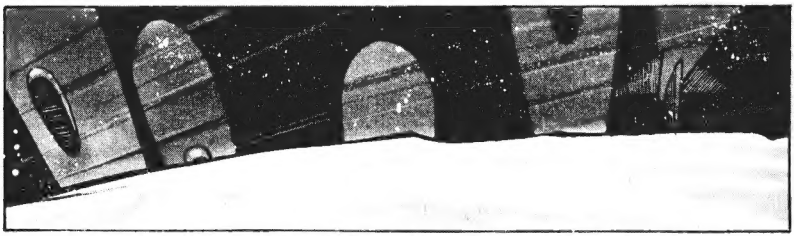
IN TIME, THE PAIR OF AIRSHIPS ARE JOINED BY STILL THREE MORE, AND THE FLEET OF **FIVE** PUSHES TOGETHER THROUGH THE ARCTIC FURY.



FIVE
A NUMBER OF ORDER AND BALANCE.



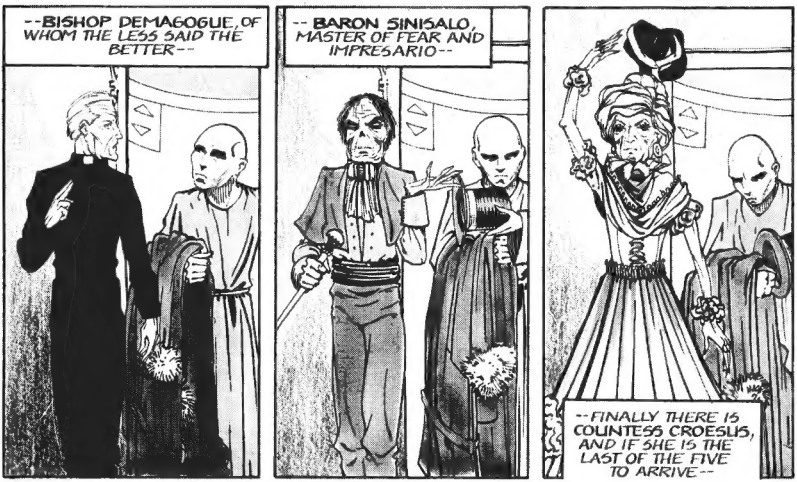
... OR CLENCH INTO A TIGHT FIST OF JEALOUS **POWER**.



AT LAST THE STRANGE FLEET COMES IN VIEW OF ITS DESTINATION--

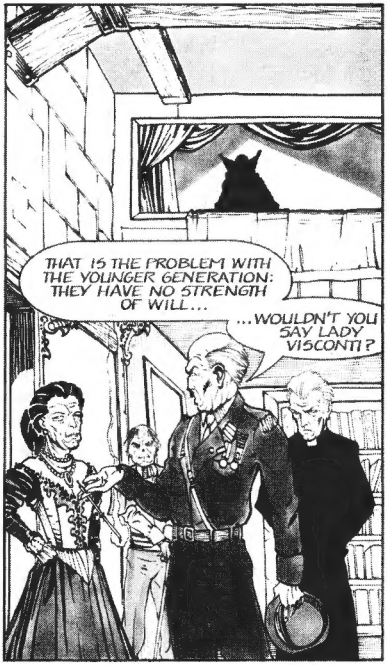
--A CYCLOPEAN FORTRESS TOWERING FROM THE VERY ICE--
--A SECRET CITADEL AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD BUILT OF STONE HEWN FROM ANCIENT QUARRIES AN IMPOSSIBLE DISTANCE AWAY--
--THE CRYPTIC STRONG-HOLD OF THE METHUSELAH SOCIETY

THEIR ZEPPELINS MOORED ABOVE, FIVE TRAVELLERS DESCEND TO THE FORTRESS. EACH TRAVELLER IS AS MYSTERIOUS AS HE OR SHE IS POWERFUL--
-- FIELD MARSHAL VON KLUDGE, LATE OF THE FURHER'S WEHRMACHT--
-- LADY VIOLANTE VISCONTI, A DIRECT DESCENDANT OF ITALY'S BLOODY MERCHANT PRINCES --

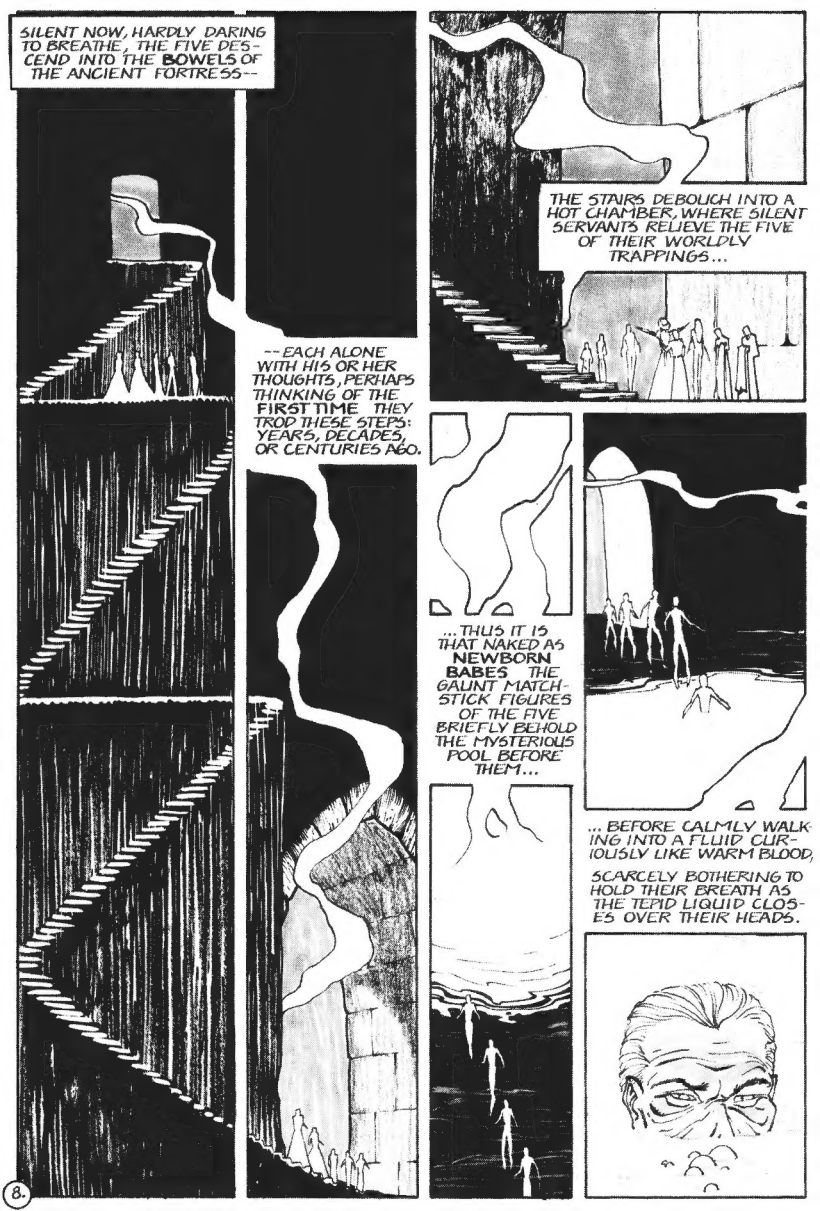

--BISHOP DEMAGOGUE, OF WHOM THE LESS SAID THE BETTER--
-- BARON SINISALO, MASTER OF FEAR AND IMPRESARIO--
--FINALLY THERE IS COUNTESS CROESUS, AND IF SHE IS THE LAST OF THE FIVE TO ARRIVE--

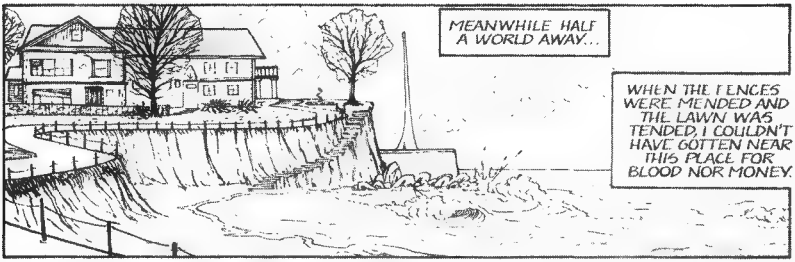
--IT IS ONLY BECAUSE SHE HAD... OTHER THINGS TO DO.

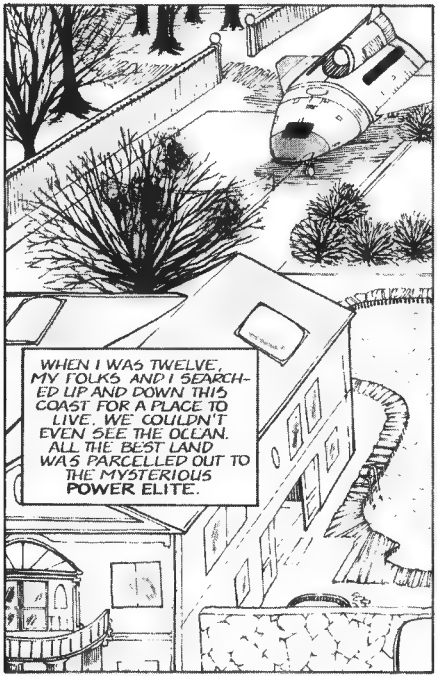
SHORTLY, INSIDE THE MYSTERIOUS FORTRESS...

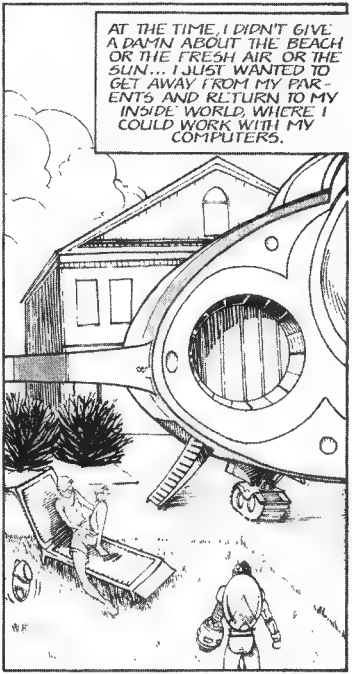


TO SEE YOU FILLS MY ANCIENT HEART WITH JOY, FOR I NEED AS MUCH TO BE IN THE COMPANY OF MY CONSPIRATORS--
--AS I NEED TO BASK IN YOUR WORSHIP, AS YOUR RIGHTFUL MASTER.
FORGIVE ME. I HAVE BEEN AN UNGRACIOUS HOST--
DEPRIVED OF NEIGHBORS WITH WHOM I CAN VISIT, I HAVE BECOME QUITE THE BOOR.
FROM YOUR ADVANCED STATE OF DECAY, I SURMISE YOU ARE ANXIOUS FOR THE CEREMONY TO BEGIN.
RISE, MY FRIENDS, AND PREPARE TO RETURN--
-- TO THE NOURISHING WATERS OF IMMORTALITY.

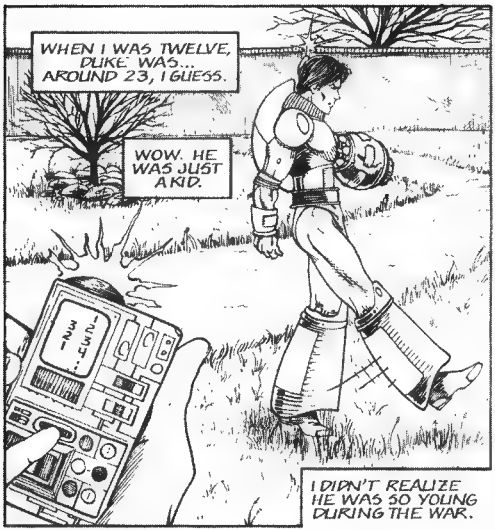

SILENT NOW, HARDLY DARING TO BREATHE, THE FIVE DESCEND INTO THE BOWELS OF THE ANCIENT FORTRESS--
--EACH ALONE WITH HIS OR HER THOUGHTS, PERHAPS THINKING OF THE FIRST TIME THEY TROD THESE STEPS: YEARS, DECADES, OR CENTURIES AGO.
THE STAIRS DEBOUCH INTO A HOT CHAMBER, WHERE SILENT SERVANTS RELIEVE THE FIVE OF THEIR WORLDLY TRAPPINGS...
...THUS IT IS THAT NAKED AS NEWBORN BABES THE GAUNT MATCH-STICK FIGURES OF THE FIVE BRIEFLY BEHOLD THE MYSTERIOUS POOL BEFORE THEM...
...BEFORE CALMLY WALKING INTO A FLUID CURIOUSLY LIKE WARM BLOOD,
SCARCELY BOTHERING TO HOLD THEIR BREATH AS THE TEPID LIQUID CLOSES OVER THEIR HEADS.

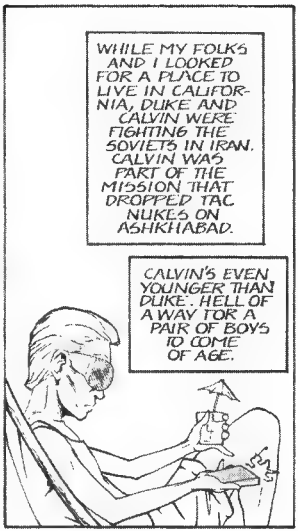

MEANWHILE HALF A WORLD AWAY...
WHEN THE FENCES WERE MENDED AND THE LAWN WAS TENDED, I COULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN NEAR THIS PLACE FOR BLOOD NOR MONEY.

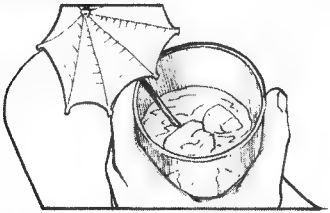

WHEN I WAS TWELVE, MY FOLKS AND I SEARCHED UP AND DOWN THIS COAST FOR A PLACE TO LIVE. WE COULDN'T EVEN SEE THE OCEAN. ALL THE BEST LAND WAS PARCELLED OUT TO THE MYSTERIOUS POWER ELITE.

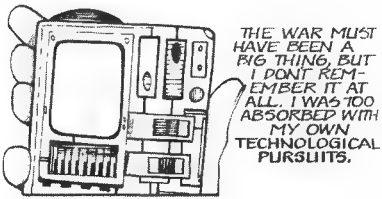

AT THE TIME, I DIDN'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT THE BEACH OR THE FRESH AIR OR THE SUN... I JUST WANTED TO GET AWAY FROM MY PARENTS AND RETURN TO MY INSIDE WORLD, WHERE I COULD WORK WITH MY COMPUTERS.

I ALWAYS THOUGHT THE GOOD LIFE WOULD BE WASTED ON ME. NOW THAT I'VE TASTED THE LIFE STYLE OF THE RICH AND FAMOUS, I'M NOT SO SURE.


WHEN I WAS TWELVE, DUKE WAS... AROUND 23, I GUESS.
WOW. HE WAS JUST A KID.
I DIDN'T REALIZE HE WAS SO YOUNG DURING THE WAR.


WHILE MY FOLKS AND I LOOKED FOR A PLACE TO LIVE IN CALIFORNIA, DUKE AND CALVIN WERE FIGHTING THE SOVIETS IN IRAN. CALVIN WAS PART OF THE MISSION THAT DROPPED TAC NUKES ON ASHKHABAD.
CALVIN'S EVEN YOUNGER THAN DUKE. HELL OF A WAY TOR A PAIR OF BOYS TO COME OF AGE.




THE WAR MUST HAVE BEEN A BIG THING, BUT I DON'T REMEMBER IT AT ALL. I WAS TOO ABSORBED WITH MY OWN TECHNOLOGICAL PURSUITS.

HERE'S TO ROGER BRUNNER, BOY GENIUS!
TWELVE YEARS OLD AND I WAS RESEARCHING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ON A CARVER FOUNDATION GRANT.

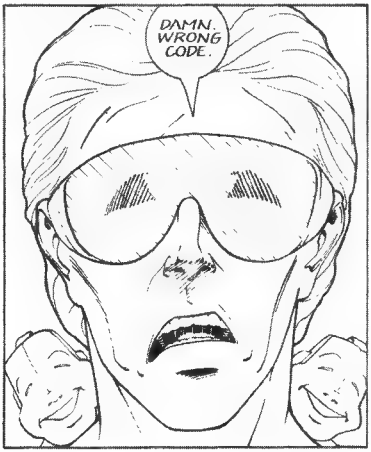
I LOST MY CHILD HOOD TO MY INTELLECT, AND MY ADULT-HOOD TO A COLD SLEEP TANK. I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW OLD I AM.

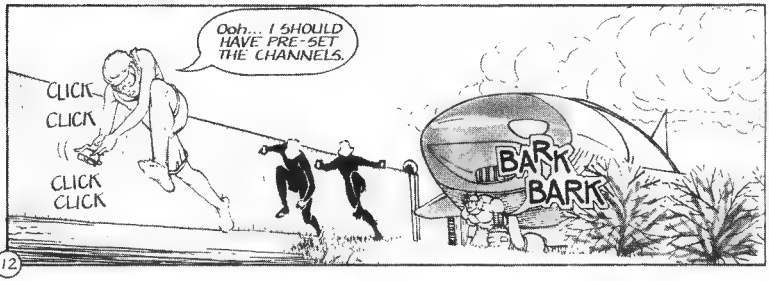
COMPUTER...
·ON LINE--
WHAT YEAR IS IT?
·2023--
RUSTLE
GEE WHIZ. THAT MAKES ME 55.
·BIOLOGICAL AGE 25--
IT IS A PUZZLEMENT. I HAVE BEEN ON THIS EARTH FOR BETTER THAN HALF A CENTURY, YET MY BODY IS ONLY A QUARTER CENTURY OLD.
MAYBE I'M 55 FOR PURPOSES OF RETIREMENT AND INTEREST ON PERSONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS BUT ONLY 25 FOR PURPOSES OF HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS.
·IRRELEVENT PENSION SAVINGS AND INSURANCE FOUNDATIONS DORMANT--
INDULGE ME WON'T YOU?
·INDULGING--
HUH?!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU TWO WANT...

ZZNG
...BUT I CAN GUESS YOU'RE UP TO NO GOOD AND I KNOW DUKE CAN HANDLE YOU, WHATEVER YOUR INTENT!
KLICK

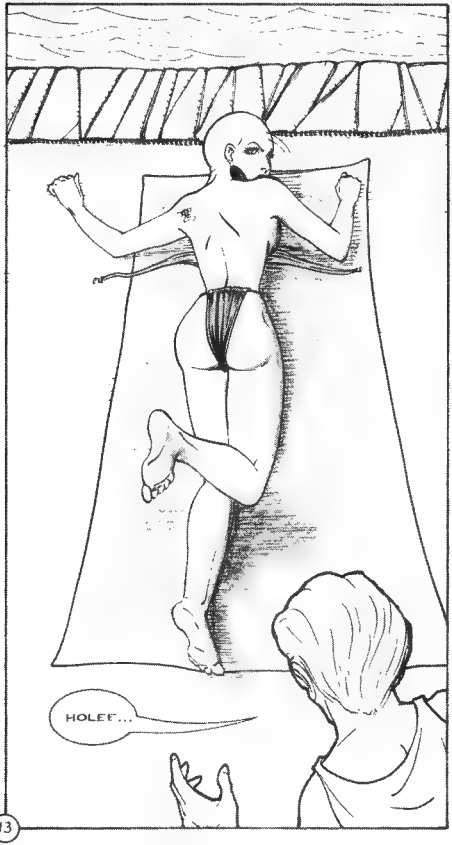
I GET NO KICK FROM CHAMPAGNE...


DAMN. WRONG CODE.


Ooh... I SHOULD HAVE PRE-SET THE CHANNELS.
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
BARK
BARK

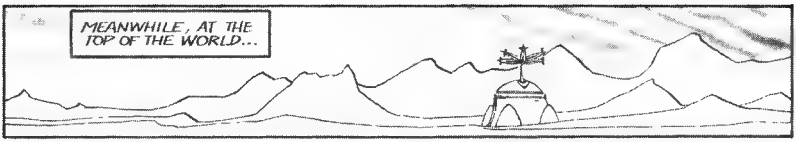
GOTTA FIND THE OTHERS.

HELP!
HELP!

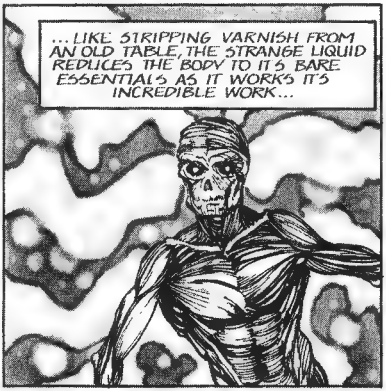

HOLEE...

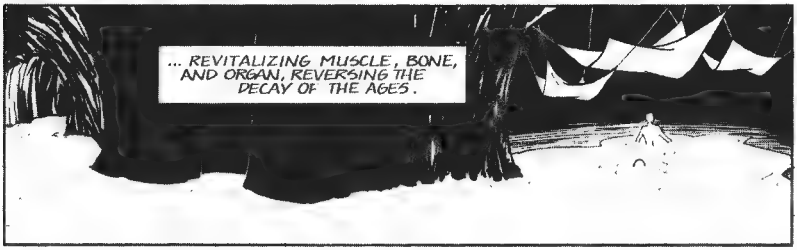
WHAT'S WITH THE BODYSUITS AND MASKS, GUYS? THIS POOL IS CLOTHING-OPTIONAL.

OH, WELL WE MOVED INTO THIS MANSION FOR A LITTLE REST AND RELAXATION
I'VE ALREADY HAD MY REST...
NOW FOR MY RELAXATION.
TOO EASY.
WIMPS.
YEAH...
AND UGLY, TOO.

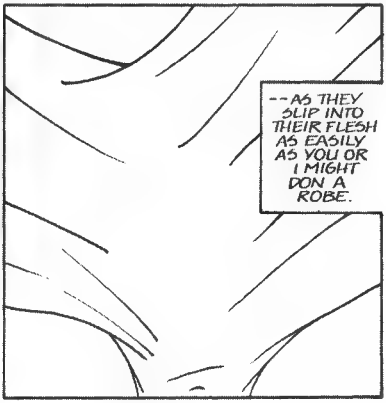

MEANWHILE, AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD...

THE CARESS OF THE WATERS OF IMMORTALITY IS SEVERE ; A CAUSTIC KISS THAT SCRUBS AWAY SKIN WITH AGE...


...LIKE STRIPPING VARNISH FROM AN OLD TABLE, THE STRANGE LIQUID REDUCES THE BODY TO ITS BARE ESSENTIALS AS IT WORKS ITS INCREDIBLE WORK...

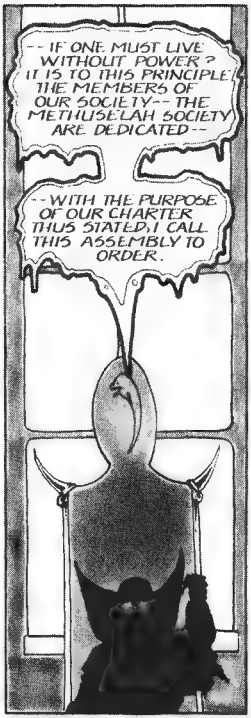

... REVITALIZING MUSCLE, BONE, AND ORGAN, REVERSING THE DECAY OF THE AGES.

LIKE BATHERS EMERGING FROM A LONG SOAK, THE FIVE SIGH WITH SENSUAL PLEASURE--


--AS THEY SLIP INTO THEIR FLESH AS EASILY AS YOU OR I MIGHT DON A ROBE.

CLAD HEAD TO TOE IN SOFT, BABY-LIKE FLESH, THE FIVE NOW APPEAR FOR ALL THE WORLD LIKE YOUNG AND HEALTHY ADULTS...
... DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE ELDEST OF THEM IS WELL OVER SEVEN CENTURIES OLD.
FOR ALL THEIR NEW-FOUND YOUTH THE FIVE ARE ANXIOUS TO CLAD THEMSELVES IN ROBES, FEELING TERRIBLY VULNERABLE--
--FOR THEIR NEW FLESH IS TENDER, RATHER LIKE THAT FOUND BENEATH THE NAIL OF YOUR SMALL TOE, WERE THAT NAIL TO BE RIPPED OFF.
BEING VETERANS OF THIS WONDEROUS CEREMONY, THE FIVE REALIZE THEIR BODIES WILL SOON BE AS GOOD AS NEW...
... ALTHOUGH THE MORE RECKLESS AMONG THEM HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO TEAR TENDER SKIN IN HASTY PURSUIT OF PLEASURES OF THE FLESH.
THEIR REBIRTH COMPLETE, THE FIVE PREPARE TO MEET

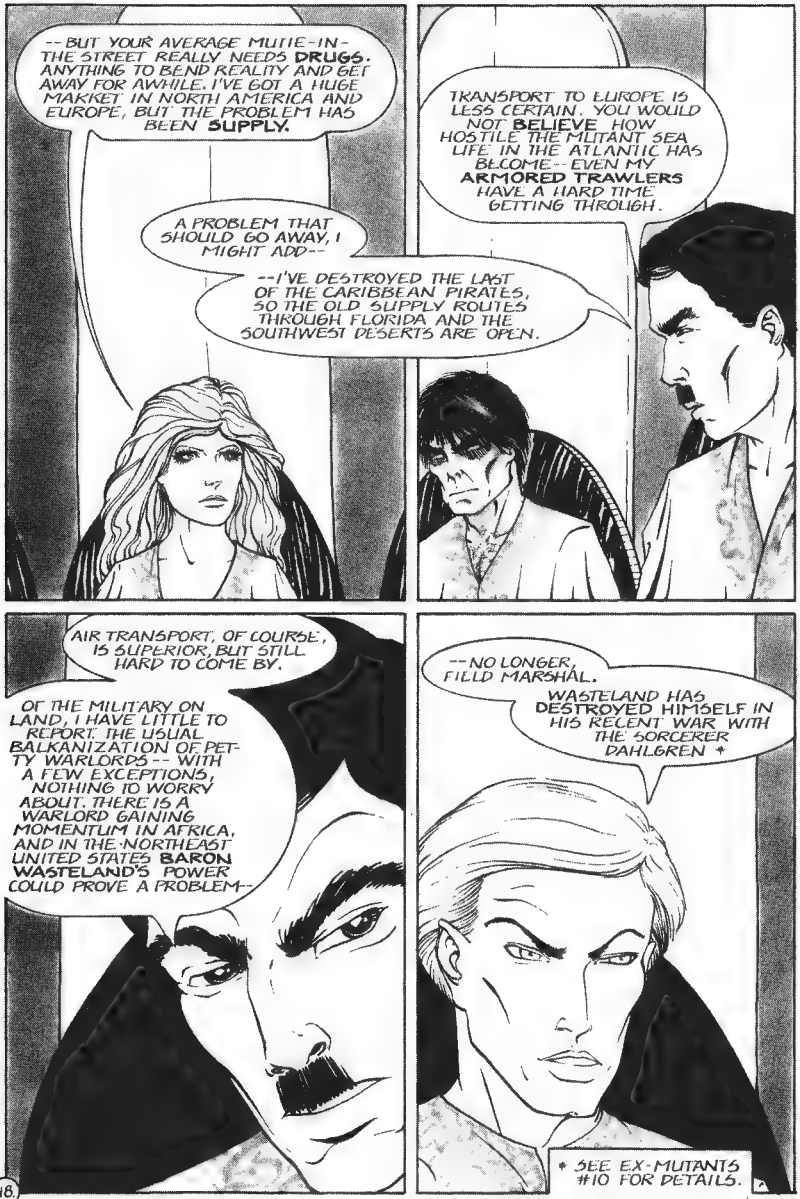
--TO DISCUSS BUSINESS THAT PROVES THEIR SOULS WERE NOT CLEANSED ALONG WITH THEIR BODIES.
AS YOUR BODIES ARE REBORN, SO IS YOUR AMBITION. FOR OF WHAT USE IS IT TO LIVE FOREVER--


--IF ONE MUST LIVE WITHOUT POWER? IT IS TO THIS PRINCIPLE THE MEMBERS OF OUR SOCIETY-- THE METHUSELAH SOCIETY ARE DEDICATED--
--WITH THE PURPOSE OF OUR CHARTER THUS STATED, I CALL THIS ASSEMBLY TO ORDER.

AS MONEY IS THE ROOT OF EVIL, SO SHALL WE HEAR FIRST FROM COUNTESS CROESUS.

WELL, I'M STILL HAVING A HARD TIME MAKING CURRENCY STICK. PRECIOUS METALS ARE MAKING A COME BACK, AS ARE DIAMONDS--I GUESS BECAUSE THEY HAVE MORE ABSTRACT VALUE.

MY CENTRAL AMERICAN AGENTS REPORT RENEWED DRUG PRODUCTION, AND AS I SAID LAST YEAR, I REALLY THINK THIS IS WHERE WE SHOULD MOVE. ONLY THE INTELLIGENCIA REALLY WANT FURS AND PLATINUM ANY MORE--


--BUT YOUR AVERAGE MUTIE-IN-THE STREET REALLY NEEDS DRUGS. ANYTHING TO BEND REALITY AND GET AWAY FOR AWHILE. I'VE GOT A HUGE MARKET IN NORTH AMERICA AND EUROPE, BUT THE PROBLEM HAS BEEN SUPPLY.
A PROBLEM THAT SHOULD GO AWAY, I MIGHT ADD--
--I'VE DESTROYED THE LAST OF THE CARIBBEAN PIRATES, SO THE OLD SUPPLY ROUTES THROUGH FLORIDA AND THE SOUTHWEST DESERTS ARE OPEN.
TRANSPORT TO EUROPE IS LESS CERTAIN. YOU WOULD NOT BELIEVE HOW HOSTILE THE MUTANT SEA LIFE IN THE ATLANTIC HAS BECOME--EVEN MY ARMORED TRAWLERS HAVE A HARD TIME GETTING THROUGH.
AIR TRANSPORT, OF COURSE, IS SUPERIOR, BUT STILL HARD TO COME BY.
OF THE MILITARY ON LAND, I HAVE LITTLE TO REPORT. THE USUAL BALKANIZATION OF PETTY WARLORDS -- WITH A FEW EXCEPTIONS, NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. THERE IS A WARLORD GAINING MOMENTUM IN AFRICA, AND IN THE NORTHEAST UNITED STATES BARON WASTELAND'S POWER COULD PROVE A PROBLEM--
--NO LONGER, FIELD MARSHAL.
WASTELAND HAS DESTROYED HIMSELF IN HIS RECENT WAR WITH THE SORCERER DAHLGREN *
* SEE EX-MUTANTS #10 FOR DETAILS.

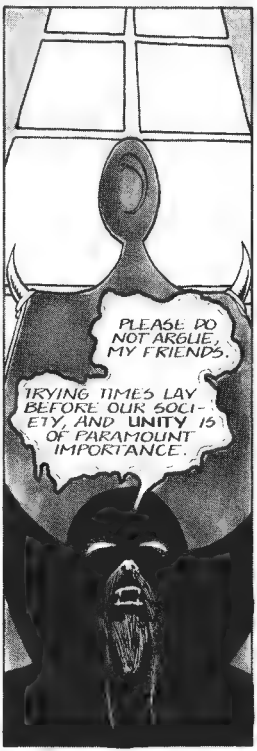
I MAINTAIN THE ENCROACHMENT OF THE "INVISIBLE WORLD" REMAINS OUR TOP PRIORITY. CLIGAT'S FOOL "DIMENSION BOMB" HAS CHANGED THE RULES.
THERE ARE GENUINE SORCERERS AROUND NEW YORK. ALSO, THERE IS THE GROWING INCIDENCE OF POCKET DIMENSIONS, SUCH AS A HOLLOW EARTH IN WHICH DINOSAURS AND SAUCERMEN DWELL.
THE POCKET DIMENSIONS REMAIN LARGELY UNDISCOVERED--
THAT IS NO LONGER SO.
THERE IS A GROUP I HAVE BEEN TRACKING. THEY ARE APPARENTLY ASTRONAUTS FROM THE JUPITER PROJECT OF THE EARLY 1990'S. AS INDIVIDUALS, THEY ARE OF NO CONCERN, BUT THEY POSSESS GREAT TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES... INCLUDING AN ADVANCED SPACE PLANE, AND A FORMIDABLE BATTLEDROID.
IT WAS THEY WHO DESTROYED THE TRIVEE SATELLITE?
YES. ALTHOUGH THERE WERE ODD CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THAT EVENT WHICH I AM STILL INVESTIGATING.
GETTING BACK TO MY ORIGINAL POINT... I UNDERSTAND THESE "NEW HUMANS" HAVE RECENTLY RETURNED FROM ONE POCKET DIMENSION THE BISHOP DESCRIBED. FROM THEIR ADVENTURE THEY SEEM TO HAVE GAINED A RENEWED SENSE OF PURPOSE...
...THEY STILL INTEND TO FOUND A NEW HUMAN RACE.
SUCH LOFTY AMBITION.

THE SPIRIT OF THE PEOPLE IS BROKEN. THEY WILL NOT BE REBORN; FURTHERMORE, THEY WILL ATTACK ANY SIGNS OF A NEW ORDER

YOUR WORK IN SUPPRESSING HOPE HAS BEEN EXCELLENT, BARON SINISALO.
THANK YOU, MASTER.

DISCOUNTING OF COURSE, THE EX-MUTANTS.
WE CONTINUE TO OVERLOOK THE EX-MUTANTS. THEY SEEM INTENT UPON EXPLOITING THEIR NASCENT DEIFCATION.

THEY ARE QUITE CHARISMATIC, AND THEY COULD DO CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE TO OUR PLANS.
I AM SURPRISED YOU HAVE NOT YET ADDRESSED THE EX MUTANTS...
ALL IN GOOD TIME WOMAN.


PLEASE DO NOT ARGUE, MY FRIENDS.
TRYING TIMES LAY BEFORE OUR SOCIETY, AND UNITY IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE.

I HAVE GIVEN MUCH CONSIDERATION TO WHAT I AM ABOUT TO SAY, AND I HAVE DECIDED IT WOULD BE WISEST AT THIS TIME--

-- TO STEP ASIDE AS LEADER OF THIS SOCIETY, AND ALLOW THE NORMAL YEARS TO TAKE THEIR TOLL.

I FIND THIS POST-HOLOCAUST WORLD HOLDS NONE OF THE ROMANCE OF THE PLANET WE HAVE FORMERLY RULED... THERE ARE NO GREAT STATES, MEN OR SAINTS AGAINST WHICH TO PIT MY WITS.

OUR SOCIETY HAS LONG SINCE ACHIEVED WORLD DOMINANCE, BUT WITHOUT OPPOSITION IT ALL SEEMS TOO EASY. I TAKE NO PLEASURE IN THE TEDIOUS ADMINISTRATION OF A GHOST EMPIRE.

I REALIZE HOWEVER, THAT I AM OLD-- FAR OLDER THAN ANY OF YOU. PERHAPS I HAVE SIMPLY GROWN TIRED OF LIFE.

I AM NOT SO OLD AS NOT TO REALIZE YOU WILL WISH TO CONTINUE AS BEFORE, AND IN THIS I OFFER MY FULL SUPPORT.

IT WILL BE NECESSARY, OF COURSE, TO ESTABLISH A NEW LEADER FOR OUR SOCIETY, BUT I AM CERTAIN YOU CAN ARRIVE AT A FAIR MEANS OF DOING SO.

I WILL NOT INVOLVE MYSELF IN THIS PROCESS, SAVE TO SAY THAT OUR STRENGTH IS IN OUR UNITY, AND THAT YOU MUST NOT ALLOW THE SOCIETY TO SUFFER FROM INTERNECINE MANEUVERS FOR MY THRONE.

WITH CONTROL OF THE SOCIETY, OF COURSE COMES THE SECRET OF THE WATERS OF IMMORTALITY.

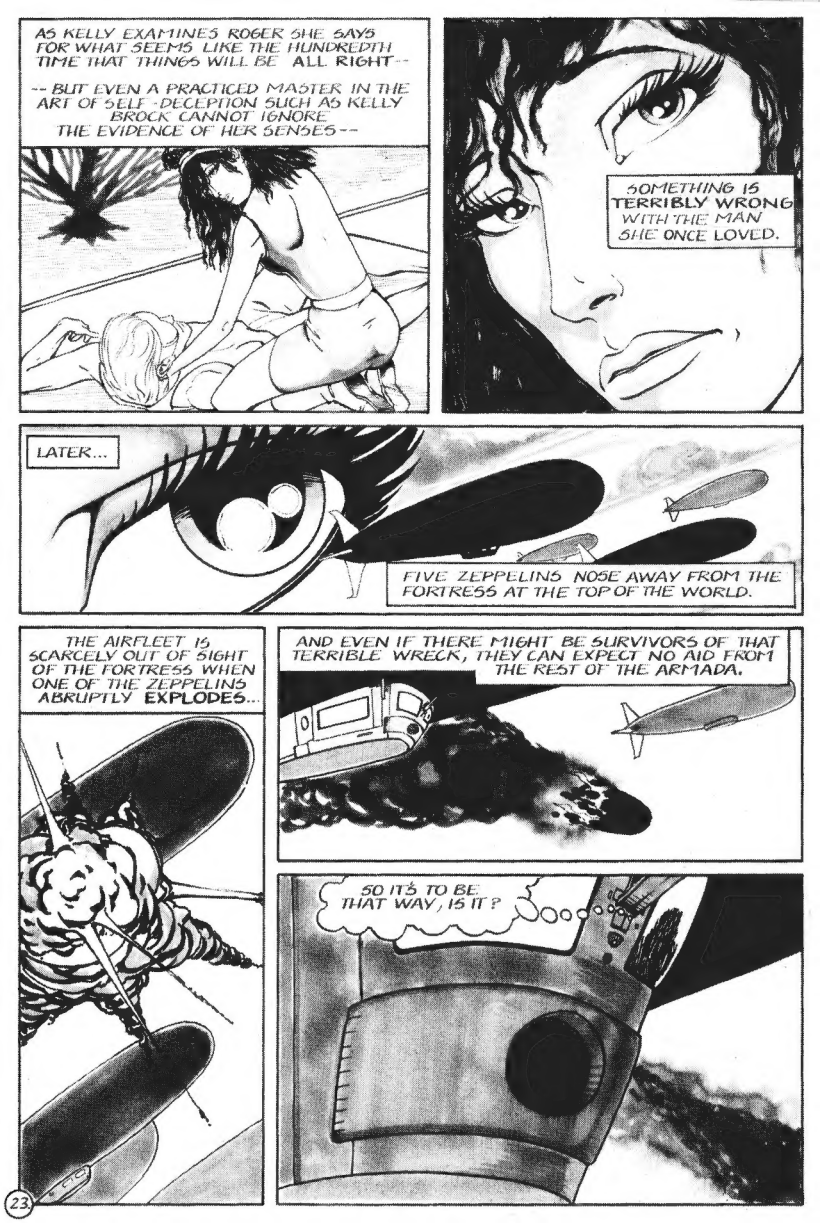
I TRUST YOU WILL EXCUSE ME IF I PARTICIPATE NO LONGER IN THIS MEETING-- YOU ARE OF COURSE WELCOME TO ENJOY THE FORTRESS AS LONG AS YOU DESIRE.

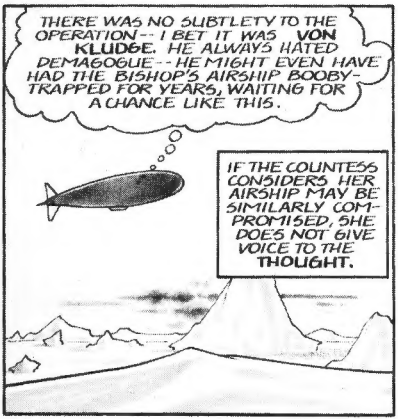
SHOULD I NEED FURTHER CONTACT WITH ANY OF YOU, I WILL DO SO INDIVIDUALLY.

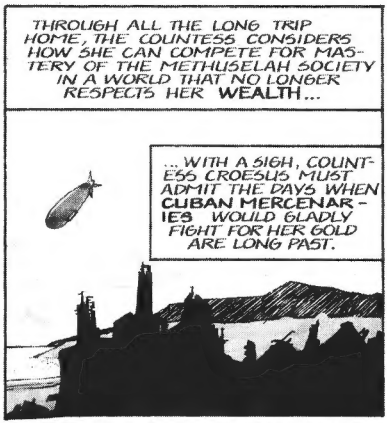
IN REVERENCE, THE MEMBERS OF THE METHUSELAH SOCIETY BOW THEIR HEADS AS THEIR SOON-TO-BE FORMER MASTER TAKES HIS LEAVE...

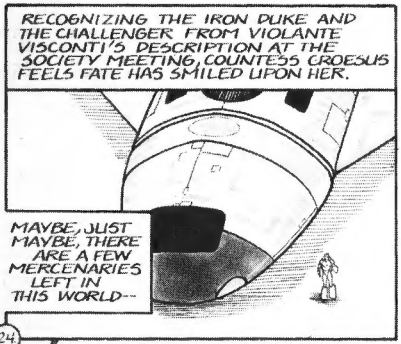
...NONETHELESS, EACH IS CAREFUL TO KEEP TRACK OF THEIR FELLOWS OUT OF THE CORNERS OF THEIR DOWNCAST EYES--

--WHILE, HALF A WORLD AWAY, CALVIN GORDON REGARDS ONE OF HIS FELLOWS WITH EYES HELD WIDE AND LEVEL
I'D LIKE TO GET CLOSE TO YOU, DELIGHT.
DON'T DO ME ANY FAVORS
NOT BAD... NOT BAD AT ALL.
IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT? WE HEARD SHOUTING--
OH.
DON'T GO FRIGID ON ME, GIRL.
I'VE SEEN THE WAY YOU LOOK AT ME. YOU WANT IT.
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU THINK YOU ARE PAL--
--BUT YOU'RE WAY OFF BASE.
POW
THAT'S OKAY. I LIKE IT ROUGH.
BETTER CHECK OUT YOUR PAL. HE TOOK ONE IN THE BACK OF THE HEAD.
C'MON, CHIP. SOMETHING STINKS AROUND HERE.


AS KELLY EXAMINES ROGER SHE SAYS FOR WHAT SEEMS LIKE THE HUNDREDTH TIME THAT THINGS WILL BE ALL RIGHT--
-- BUT EVEN A PRACTICED MASTER IN THE ART OF SELF-DECEPTION SUCH AS KELLY BROCK CANNOT IGNORE THE EVIDENCE OF HER SENSES--
SOMETHING IS TERRIBLY WRONG WITH THE MAN SHE ONCE LOVED.
LATER...
FIVE ZEPPELINS NOSE AWAY FROM THE FORTRESS AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD.
THE AIRFLEET IS SCARCELY OUT OF SIGHT OF THE FORTRESS WHEN ONE OF THE ZEPPELINS ABRUPTLY EXPLODES...
AND EVEN IF THERE MIGHT BE SURVIVORS OF THAT TERRIBLE WRECK, THEY CAN EXPECT NO AID FROM THE REST OF THE ARMADA.
SO IT'S TO BE THAT WAY, IS IT?







NEXT ISSUE THE METHUSELAH SOCIETY, PART TWO: *MEAT PUPPET*

King Spyder